

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2856

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, MX

SUBJ: MISTREATMENT OF AMERICAN PRISONERS

REF: MEXICO 6122 AND PREVIOUS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. NOVEDADES TODAY PUBLISHED UPI STORY DATED MEXICO, JULY 18 THAT AMERICAN AND CANADIAN PRISONERS, IN THE NINTH DAY OF THEIR HUNGER STRIKE, HAVE REQUESTED A TOURIST BOYCOTT OF MEXICO FOR ALLEGED MISTREATMENT OF THEM BY MEXICAN AUTHORITIES. ACCORDING TO THE STORY, THEY HAVE ALSO ASKED THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE THE INTERVENTION OF WASHINGTON OFFICIALS WHICH INCREASES THE PRISONER'S PROBLEMS.
2. ALTHOUGH THEY ADMIT THEIR GUILT, THE STORY CONTINUES, CERTAIN LEGAL OPPORTUNITIES (UNSPECIFIED) HAVE BEEN DENIED TO THEM AT THE REQUEST OF THE UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES.
3. THE STORY CONCLUDES BY QUOTING THE PRISONERS AS SAYING (IN APPARENT CONTRADICTION OF THEMSELVES) THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE IS DIRECTED SOLELY AGAINST THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND NOT AGAINST MEXICAN AUTHORITIES OR ANY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL OF LECUMBERRI PRISON.
4. IN ANOTHER STATEMENT DATED JULY 13 (BUT WHICH HAS NOT APPEARED

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IN THE LOCAL PRESS), IN ADDITION TO THE ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING

U.S. EMBASSY INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL WORKINGS OF MEXICAN JUSTICE, THE PRISONERS CHARGED THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE CG'S DENIALS ("BALD-FACED LIES") THAT U.S. POLICE OFFICERS ARE OPERATING OUT OF THE EMBASSY, "DEA AGENTS HAVE NOT ONLY BEEN PRESENT AT THE TIME OF MANY ARRESTS BUT IN SEVERAL CASES HAVE OBSERVED BEATINGS AND OTHER TORTURES ADMINISTERED TO U.S. CITIZENS BY MEXICAN POLICE". FSO FRANCESCO ALBERTI, THE EMBASSY'S NARCOTICS COORDINATOR, IS INCORRECTLY AND FALSELY IDENTIFIED AS SUCH AN AGENT.

5. A SEPARATE STATEMENT WAS ALSO ISSUED ON JULY 12 BY JAMES P. NORTON. DEA IDENTIFIES NORTON AS THE MAJOR COCAINE SUPPLIER FOR THE STATE OF HAWAII AND UNDER INDICTMENT BY FEDERAL AUTHORITIES THERE. IN HIS STATEMENT, NORTON SAID THAT ON MARCH 25, 1974, ARTHUR SEDILLO OF DEA CONFRONTED HIM AND IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS AN AGENT WORKING THROUGH THE EMBASSY. THE CONFRONTATION IS SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE AFTER NORTON WAS "INTERROGATED AND BEATEN FOR NEARLY SIX HOURS..." IN THIS LATTER CONNECTION, ALTHOUGH CONSULAR OFFICERS SPOKE WITH NORTON AND HIS LAWYERS WITHIN FIVE DAYS OF HIS ARREST, AT NO RPT NO TIME DID THEY COMPLAIN THAT HE HAD BEEN MISTREATED.

END UNCLASSIFIED.

BEGIN LOU:

FYI

6. DEA HAS CONFIRMED THAT SEDILLO, AT REQUEST MEXICAN FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE, SPOKE WITH NORTON AFTER HIS ARREST, BUT DID NOT RPT NOT COMPLAIN TO SEDILLO OF MISTREATMENT AT HANDS OF POLICE NOR DID SEDILLO SEE ANY MARKS EVIDENCING BEATING AS NOW ALLEGED BY NORTON. CONFIRMATION BY DEPARTMENT OR OTHER USG SOURCE THAT MEXICAN AUTHORITIES PERMIT PRESENCE OF DEA AGENTS IN WHAT MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS OPERATIONAL CAPACITY COULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON COOPERATIVE ANTI-DRUG EFFORT. END CLASSIFIED. FYI.
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